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C O N F I D E N T I A L MINSK 000915

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/01/2017

TAGS: [PGOV PHUM PINR BO](#)

SUBJECT: FORMER PRESIDENTIAL AIDE ON LUKASHENKO AND CRONIES

REF: A. MINSK 336

[1B](#). 06 MINSK 641

Classified By: Ambassador Karen Stewart for reason 1.4 (d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) Former Presidential Administration Press Advisor Aleksandr XXXXXXXXXXXX told Pol/Econ Chief on October 23 that Lukashenko has not deci

Lukashenko: "Should I Stay or Should I Go (in 2011)?"

[1](#)2. (C) XXXXXXXXXXXX argued that Lukashenko feared losing power, but was nonetheless contemplating the installation of his son Viktor as presi
they have amassed enough wealth to retire comfortably, according to XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Support for Better Relations with the West

[1](#)3. (C) XXXXXXXXXXXX reasoned that several important groups favored improved relations with the West to ward off increasing Russian influence.
B) understand that they cannot compete against Russian business in open privatizations. In non-transparent deals they could use their connecti

Lukashenko: A Soviet-Style Ruler Sans Mass Executions

[1](#)4. (C) XXXXXXXXXXXX described Lukashenko as a product of his
upbringing -- a Belarusian Soviet peasant turned ideology officer. Raised in the Soviet Union, Lukashenko naturally believes that the state ru
Army political officer, the dictator understands the use of ideology as a veneer to mask the true intentions of one's actions.

[1](#)5. (C) Lukashenko can make decisions, including harsh ones, said XXXXXXXXXXXX, but he knows to stop short of allowing opponents
to tie him to extra-judicial executions. Murder is the only sin a ruler could commit that the Belarusian people would never forgive. XXXXXXXX

Comment: Keep Driving a Hard Bargain

[1](#)6. (C) Lukashenko would like the West to think that he can always turn toward Russia rather than face continued isolation. In fact, options f
STEWART